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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

# INFORMATION REPORT

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Astrakhan

2. There are two approaches to the port of Astrakhan. The first is from the Baku side and is as follows: Thirty miles northeast of Chechen Island is the "Astrakhansky Priyomny", a two-masted lightship which is painted red with a horizontal white stripe along the side. From this lightship ships approach Astrakhan by the following line of buoys:

Buoy No 73 - flashing white and red light, 8.6 miles from the lightship;

Buoy No 40 - flashing red light, 15.2 miles from Buoy No 73; the depths between the lightship and Buoy No 40 are 7-8.5 meters;

From Buoy No 40 to Buoy No 66, which shows a white flashing light (past the "guard bucy" which is 4.3 miles from Bucy No 40) is 17.3 miles. The depths in this interval are 5-5.5 meters;

From Buoy No 66 ships go to the landing stage "Donbass" which shows a steady white light. The "Donbass" is a two-masted, two-stacked ship with a black hull and a white superstructure, 5.5 miles from Buoy No 66; It is six miles from the landing stage "Donbass" to the lightship "Volgo-kaspisky" which stands at the entrance to the Volga-Caspian channel. This is a small yellow ship with a single mast. The depths between Buoy No 66 and the "Volgo-kaspisky" are 3.5-4.5 meters.

3. In the approach to Astrakhan the "Astrakhansky Priyomny", Buoy No 73 and Bucy No 40 are on the port side, Bucy No 66 on the starboard side, the landing stage "Donbass" on the port side and the "Volgo-kaspisky" on the starboard side. From the "Volgo-kaspisky" all traffic must keep strictly within the channel limits. The average width of the channel is 40-50 meters, in certain places coming down to 40

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meters (in the area of the banks between the island of Biryuchya Kosa and the village of Olya). The average depth of the channel is 3.2-3.5 meters.

From the lightship "Volgo-kaspisky" to Iskustvenny Island there is a channel which is marked by metal buoys equipped with acetylene lamps. These lamps are lighted by hand. They are serviced by the maintenance steamers "Mayak" and "Putyeyets" which belong to the maintenance division of the "Reydtanker" shipping company. Turning Buoy No 33 is located 5.2 miles from the "Volgo-kaspisky". From Iskustvenny Island there is a channel up to the traverse of Biryuchya Kosa Island. The sea part of the channel is marked by "little lights" (ognyovki). These lights are small wooden boats which are not self-propelled. When it is dark they carry a kerosene lantern at the mast. They are serviced by three men from the floating light service crew of the "Reydtanker" company (Matrosov Plouvuchikh Mayakov). Altogether there are 15-18 such lights. Beyond these small lights in the vicinity of the banks (shalyg) the sea part of the channel is marked by spar-buoys (kolovaya obstanovka). The stretch of channel between Iskustvenny Island and the village of Olya is technically rather unsatisfactory. It gets filled up often because the bottom is very soft and dredges are always working in the channel.

4. About six miles or less from the village of Olya, the channel is marked by nun-buoys. These buoys are made of wood, painted red and white and are equipped with kerosene lanterns. When it is dark the buoys are lighted by buoy keepers who live in special quarters along the banks of the Volga. From Olya up along the Volga the river part of the Volga-Caspian channel begins. This channel is completely marked by nun-buoys which are posted at intervals of 1-1.5 kilometers. There are 42 buoys along the entire river part of the channel. Besides the buoys, the river part of the channel is marked by three beacons which are located at the narrowest points along the channel where two meeting boat caravans cannot pass each other. The beacons are located in the vicinity of the Sergeisky bend and near the village of Kharbay. These beacons consist of a wooden pole which is fitted with lighted signals when it is dark. These beacons are serviced by signal service men. The average depth of the river part of the channel is 3.5 meters. The most dangerous part of the route is the Sergeisky bend. Here two conflicting currents meet. Often, especially in the months of May, April and October there occur great jams of the boat caravans going to Astrakhan. When this happens auxillary tugs are sent out to help and the double pull which is exerted is enough to drag each barge around the bend. Sometimes as many as 10-15 large boats get involved in such a jam. The river part of the Volga-Caspian channel ends near the village of Ilinka (post No 1). Any traffic above this point on the Volga is regulated by the routing director of the Ministry of the river fleet.

5. The largest petroleum storage base in the Astrakhan area is located in the region of Ilinka. The majority of the sea oil barges come here to unload while the greater part of the Volga tank barge fleet comes to load. On the map this base is indicated by No I. All ships belonging to "Reydtanker" (barges and tugs) are based at Zayachy Island (No II). [redacted] No III indicates the place dry-cargo sea-going ships arrive from Baku (Piers 4,5 and 17). 50X1-HUM

6. The headquarters of the technical and maintenance division of the Volga-Caspian channel is in the village of Olya. The maintenance craft are based here at all times, but in the winter, when the channel is closed to navigation, all navigational aids are brought here, the lightship "Volgo-kaspisky", the buoy-servicing crane, buoys, lights and floating lights. The technical and maintenance division also has its own radio station in Olya. The landing stage "Donbass" belongs to "Reydtanker" and when the channel is closed to navigation it is taken away to Astrakhan.

7. On the old charts of the area around the "Donbass" a 12-foot roadstead is indicated. Nowadays this does not exist. Now there is a 14-foot-deep roadstead located further south than the 12-foot one. It is an area marked on the map by a red wavy line between the "Donbass", Buoy No 66 and the "guard buoy". Here small and medium sized tankers of the "Kasptanker" company with capacities up to 2000-2500 tons are unloaded into the barges of the "Reydtanker" company. This includes the greater part of the ships. Between Buoy No 73, Buoy No 50 and the "Astrakhansky Priyomny" lightship there is an area (marked on the chart by a dotted red and green line) called "the deep". Here the unloading of the large "Kasptanker" tankers into the "Reydtanker" barges takes place. As a rule the unloading of the tankers takes place on the move. At first the barge ties up to the tanker and the transloading begins with the two ships immobile. Then, when the draft of the tanker decreases, the tanker starts off in the direction of Buoy No 40, pulling the barge with it while the transloading proceeds. Beside sea-going ships, fishing boats also gather in the roadstead (around the islands of Chistaya Banka, Banka Malaya and Banka Srednaya Zhemchuzhnaya). The 14-foot roadstead is closed, as a rule [redacted] 50X1-HUM

8. The second approach to Astrakhan is from the Gurev side and the approach is made by following the charts and buoys. Ships use the following course: The Gurev sea roadstead. Buoy No 22 (about 80 miles from the Gurev roads). This buoy is to starboard, is red and shows a flashing light. The depths in this interval are 5-7 meters; Buoy No 15 is to starboard about 63 miles from Buoy No 22. The depths in this interval are 5-6 meters; Buoy No 24 is on the port side about 25 miles from Buoy No 15. The depths in this interval are 5-6 meters; Buoy No 31 is about 19.5 miles from Buoy No 24 and is on the starboard side. The depths in this interval are 4-5 meters; Buoy No 66 is about 22 miles from Buoy No 31 and is on the port side. The depths in this interval are 4-5 meters. After passing Buoy No 66 ships proceed to Astrakhan



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in the same manner as described in approach from the Baku side. The port of Gurev is closed to sea shipping. Oil shipping does exist across the Gurev sea roadstead to Peshnoy Island and from there by pipeline to Factory No 441. The approaches to Gurev are characterized by the following data: 80 miles from Buoy No 22 is the landing stage "Mary". This landing stage was built from the old steamer "Mary" and belongs to the "Kaspflot" company. The landing stage "Kommuna", which appeared on the old charts, burned [redacted] there was a fire in the Gurev roads and the wreckage is now in Astrakhan harbor. ([redacted] The Gurev roadstead lies in a radius of 1.5-2 miles around the "Mary". The depths in this roadstead are 3.5-4 meters. In the Gurev roads the transloading of petroleum products from the large "Reydtanker" barges (up to 5000 tons) into the little barges (800-1000 tons) of the same company is carried out. The large barges are brought in from the 14-foot roads while the small barges (pauzki) are brought in from the cove on Peshnoy Island. The transloading is carried out by means of the pumps on the "Mary" and on the lighter "Novobogatinsk" which is also brought in.

9. From the Gurev roads to the cove on Bol'shoy Peshnoy the depth has decreased sharply in recent times, not reaching 1.5 meters, and ship traffic has to go by the Uralo-kaspisky channel. Practically speaking, [redacted] only the sea part of this channel was in working order.

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0. The river part of the Uralo-kaspisky channel goes from the entrance to the cove on Bol'shoy Peshnoy to the delta of the Ural River. The section of the channel from Bol'shoy Peshnoy to the entrance of the delta (4-4.5 miles) was completely filled up with alluvium from the Ural River and the "Reydtekhflot" [redacted] tried in every way possible to open the channel but was unable to do so and the prospect of ever doing so was, at that time, not very good. The depth in this section is 1-1.4 meters. The sea part of the channel from Bol'shoy Peshnoy to the "Mary" is 11-12 miles. For a distance of 4-5 miles from the "Mary" the channel is marked by buoys. The following 6-7 miles are marked by "little lights" (ognyovki) (of the same type as are used in the Volga-Caspian channel) and by spar-buoys. The depth in this part of the channel does not exceed two meters while the width is 20 meters. On Bol'shoy Peshnoy there is a wooden tower which carries lights and signals. This tower, however, has very little practical use.

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1. There are always at least 10-20 oil tankers on the Gurev sea roads. Connections with the town of Gurev are maintained by cutters and tugs. [redacted] the roadstead is closed.

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2. [redacted] a project was worked out for methods of strengthening the underwater shoring of the sides of the Uralo-kaspisky channel, but there still have been no practical results. The silting of the channel is so great that there are always two dredges working to keep it clear.

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The Sea Roadstead in the Area of Port Shevchenko

3. Between Kulali Island and the Mangishlak peninsula there is a reserve roadstead for the transloading of tankers used by the "Kaspflot" and "Reydtanker" companies. Nowadays it is used very seldom. After World War II this roadstead was used more frequently for the transloading of oil. [redacted] The quantity of petroleum products transloaded at this roadstead [redacted] did not exceed 200-250 thousand tons. [redacted] this roadstead (Bautinsky roads) was a major transloading point. [redacted] the 14-foot roadstead was closed.

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4. [redacted] the following two approaches to the Bautinsky roads were closed.

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(a) From the side of the 14-foot roadstead. The landing stage "Donbass" and Buoy No 66 are to starboard in passing, Buoy No 31 to port and Buoy No 24 to starboard. From Buoy No 24 ships bear on the north light of Kulali Island (flashing white). Ships run 58 miles on this bearing and the depths in this interval are 4-8 meters. Passing with the north light to the port side, ships bear along Kulali Island on the floating light "Verkhny Tyub-karagansky" and on Buoy No 140. Ships run 23 miles on this bearing and the depths in this interval are 5-6 meters.

(b) From the Gurev side. From Buoy No 22 ships bear on the north light of Kulali Island. This bearing is kept for 56 miles and the depths are 4-5 meters. Passing with the north light to starboard, ships bear along Kulali Island on the south light and Buoy No 79 to the roadstead. This bearing is kept for 23 miles and the depths in this interval are 3.5-4.5 meters.

15. Bautinsky roads occupies an area between Buoy No 79 and Buoy No 140 along the southern part of the island of Kulali.

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16. [redacted] there was no oil transloading in the Bautinsky roads and none was planned [redacted]

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Baku

17. (a) Approach from the north made by heavy vessels drawing more than five meters of water. The most important orientation point is the floating light near Zhiloi Island. Two miles north-east of Zhiloi Island there is a buoy with a red flashing light and an intermittent horn signal. Passing with this buoy to starboard, ships go to the next buoy



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which is two miles south of Zhiloi and shows a red flashing light. The distance between the two buoys is six miles and the depths are 20-25 meters. Passing with the second buoy to starboard, ships go south-west to the Shakhov buoy which lies three miles south of Shakhov Island. This buoy has a red flashing light. The distance between the two buoys is 10.5 miles and the depths are 16-18 meters. Passing with the Shakhov buoy to starboard, ships go to Nargin Island passing on the way the red flashing buoy at Baika Makarov. Ships pass this buoy at a distance of 3-4 miles. From the Shakhov buoy to Nargin Island is 20-21 miles. Nargin Island has a flashing light. Ships entering Bakinsky Bay pass with Nargin Island to starboard. Nargin Island is situated four miles from a seacoast town and pilots of ships passing Nargin Island take their bearings on the wharves in this town. The depths between the Shakhov light and Nargin Island are 8-12 meters. Depths in Bakinsky Bay fluctuate between 4 and 8 meters.

(b) Approach from the north made by shallow and medium draft vessels drawing up to five meters of water. The orientation point is the Apsheronsky floating light. Ships enter in a line between the horn buoys and bear in the direction of Artyom Island. Passing with the red flashing buoy 3.5 miles north of Artyom Island, ships go toward Zhiloi Island. Leaving behind to starboard the bucy with the white flashing light 1.3 miles east of Artyom Island, and the flashing red and white buoy 1.5 miles southeast of Artyom and the red and white flashing buoy 3 miles southeast of Artyom, ships bear on a line between Zhiloi Island and the read and white flashing buoy three miles west of Zhiloi Island. The depths in this interval are 5-10 meters. Passing with the buoy to starboard and Zhiloi to port, ships turn southwest and go to Shakhov Bay, taking the previously described route. The depths between Shakhov Bay and Zhiloi Island are five meters and higher. This route shortens the journey to Baku a little bit but is more difficult. Pilots try to use the longer route rounding Zhiloi with the Island to starboard especially if the ship is carrying cargo. Ships coming out of Krasnovodsk always use the following route: Zhiloi Island - Shakhov buoy - Nargin Island - Pirai - Baku.

Krasnovodsk

Approach to the port of Krasnovodsk. Passing the floating light "Krasnovodsky" with the light to starboard ships enter Krasnovodsk Bay and turn northwest, running in a line between the white flashing light on the end of Krasnovodsk Cape and the white flashing buoy located three miles from the cape. Ships usually stand close to the buoy or round it with the bucy to port. The distance between the "Krasnovodsky" and the bucy is 5.5 miles, and the depths are 4-12 meters. From this line ships go to the turning red and white flashing buoy which stands at the entrance to the channel. The distance from this line to the turning bucy is 10-11 miles, and the depths are 4-5 meters. From the turning buoy by the channel, ships go between the right-hand flashing white buoy and the flashing red buoy, and enter the area of the port of Krasnovodsk. The length of the channel is 5-6 miles, the depth is 4-5 meters and the width is about 40 meters. On the shore of the port there are signals in line with lights on the west and east sides of the port and there is also a light.

Ufra

Approach to the port of Ufra. Up to the turning bucy the approach is made as described above. From the buoy, rounding it on the port side, ships turn up the channel in the direction of Ufra. The length of the channel is four miles, the depth is four meters and the width is about 30 meters. The channel is marked by spar-buoys and by light buoys. There is a light on the shore. Ufra is situated 7-8 miles from Krasnovodsk. The petroleum port is located here.

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